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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/012,195	12/05/2001	Lawrence G. Clawson	3402.1007-000	5684

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EXAMINER

PATEL, VINIT H

ART UNIT PAPER NUMBER

1764

DATE MAILED: 04/08/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/012,195

Applicant(s)

CLAWSON ET AL.

Examiner

Vinit H. Patel

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 1 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
 - If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
 - If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
 - Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 04 June 2002.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-49 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☒ Claim(s) 1-49 are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
- Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

Election/Restrictions

1. Restriction to one of the following inventions is required under 35 U.S.C. 121:

- I. Claims 21-24 and 33-36, drawn to a method of reforming hydrogen rich gas, classified in class 48, subclass 127.9.
- II. Claims 1-20, 25-29, 30-32, 37-49, drawn to an apparatus for generating hydrogen rich reformat from hydrocarbon feed, classified in class 422, subclass 188.

2. The inventions are distinct for the following reasons:

Inventions I & II are a method and apparatus for its practice. The inventions are distinct if it can be shown that (1) the method claimed can be practiced by another materially different apparatus or the apparatus as claimed can be used to practice another materially different method. See MPEP 806.05(e). In this case, the method may be practiced by an other reforming apparatus having a plurality of reaction zones in a different configuration.

The inventions are distinct for the reasons given above and have acquired separate status in the art by their classification. Furthermore, the search required for Group II would not be required for Group I, thus restriction for examination purposes as indicated is proper.

3. Once the applicant elects of the above indicated inventions, a further restriction to a patently distinct species, as set forth below is required:

Species a-1 is a reactor for generating hydrogen enriched reformat wherein feedstock/steam is heated in a zone between a core reaction zone and high temperature shift bed, and a partial oxidation section is adjacent the autothermal reformer, for example in Fig. 1.

Species a-2 is a reactor for generating hydrogen enriched reformat with tubes surrounding the autothermal reactor for preheating fuel/steam mixture without a partial oxidation section, for example in Fig. 4.

Applicant is required under 35 U.S.C. 121 to elect a single disclosed species for prosecution on the merits to which claims shall be restricted if no generic claim is finally held allowable. Currently none of the claims appears generic.

Applicant is advised that a reply to this requirement must include an identification of the species that is elected consonant with this requirement and a listing of all claims readable thereon. An argument that a claim is allowable or that all claims are generic is considered non-responsive unless accompanied by a restriction.

Upon the allowance of a generic claim, applicant will be entitled to consideration of claims to additional species which are written in dependent form or otherwise include all the limitations of an allowed generic claim as provided by 37 CFR 1.141. If claims are added after the election, applicant must indicate which are readable upon the elected species. MPEP 809.02(a).

Should applicant traverse on the ground that the species are not patentably distinct, applicant should submit evidence or identify such evidence now of record showing the species to be obvious variants or clearly admit on the record that this is the

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case. In either instance, if the examiner finds one of the inventions unpatentable over the prior art, the evidence or admission may be used in a rejection under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) of the other invention.

Due to complexity of the above restriction requirement, no telephone call was made to request an oral election. Applicant is advised that the reply to this requirement to be complete must include an election of the invention to be examined even though the requirement be traversed. 37 CFR 1.143.

Applicant is reminded that upon the cancellation of claims to a non-elected invention, the inventorship must be amended in compliance with 37 CFR 1.48(b) if one or more of the currently named inventors is no longer an inventor of at least one claim remaining in the application. Any amendment of inventorship must be accompanied by a request under 37 CFR 1.48(b) and by the fee required under 37 CFR 1,17(i).

Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Vinit H. Patel whose telephone number is (571) 272-0856. The examiner can normally be reached on 9:00 am - 6:00 pm.


If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Glenn Caldarola can be reached on (571) 272-1444. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

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Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).



Vinit H. Patel
April 4, 2005


Alexa Dorashenk
Patent Examiner
Art Unit 1764